



**PHASE 3 PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR REOPENING
UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

August 5, 2020

Submitted by the Office of the Campus CEO
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Update #8 to the Higher Education Report: Recommendations for Reopening Undergraduate Colleges and Universities

PHASE 3 PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR REOPENING UNDERGRADUATE RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Issued by Mark Ojakian, State Lead for Reopening Higher Education

Revised July 17, 2020

The Report of the Higher Education Subcommittee submitted to the Governor on May 6, 2020 sets forth the guidance and requirements for colleges and universities to reopen undergraduate residential programs. See <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Office-of-the-Governor/News/20200506-Recommendations-to-Governor-Lamont-for-a-phased-reopening-of-colleges-and-universities.pdf?la=en> for the May 6 report and for the update memos that have been issued. Additional update memos are likely to be issued during the summer as information is obtained.

Four plans are required to be submitted by each institution; these include:

- A plan for repopulating the campus (the reentry of students)
- A plan for monitoring the health of students, faculty and staff
- A plan for containing cases that develop
- A plan for shutdown of the campus if it becomes necessary.

The plans are to be submitted to the Department of Public Health (Thomas.St.Louis@ct.gov; Av.Harris@ct.gov and Brie.Wolf@ct.gov), with a copy to Mark Ojakian, whom the Governor appointed to be the State's lead for the reopening of higher education in Connecticut (CSCU-President@ct.edu.) The Plans need to be submitted in advance of reopening under Phase 3; the Subcommittee recommends that they be submitted no later than three weeks before the intended arrival of students. Students may return to campus on or after August 14, 2020.

This memorandum outlines the requirements for each Plan as interpreted by the Subcommittee.

Please note that the State continue make additional guidance that may modify this Framework. Please visit the Stay informed section of the state's ReOpen website <https://reopen.ct.gov> regularly for supplemental counsel.

REOPENING PLANS FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN PHASE 3—FALL 2020

Name of Institution: **Middlesex Community College**

Senior COVID-19 Coordinator (Name and Title): Kim Hogan, Dean of Administration
 Email and cell phone: khogan@mxcc.edu; 860-608-9613

Backup COVID-19 Coordinator (Name and Title): Steven Minkler, Chief Executive Officer
 Email and cell phone: sminkler@mxcc.edu; 203-518-0358

Intended date of arrival of the first students (on or after August 10):
August 10, 2020 (for enrollment services), August 26, 2020 (for classes)

Intended date of classes starting: **August 26, 2020**

Intended duration of the fall semester or quarter: **Classes and exams end December 16, 2020**

Date submitted: **August 5, 2020**

PART 1 - PLAN FOR REPOPULATING THE CAMPUS (the reentry of students)

Classrooms:

Physical spacing of 6-feet between students and employees will be achieved for campus repopulation during the Fall 2020 semester. With a few exceptions (noted below), social distancing will be realized by employing the following strategies:

- The Dean of Academic & Student Affairs and the faculty significantly modified the Fall 2020 class schedule to employ a wider variety of instructional modalities. This was done to reduce the total number of students on campus at any one time by at least 50% compared to pre-COVID. These modalities include but are not limited to traditional in-person, fully online, hybrid-scheduling (half of the students on campus with half online), and synchronously-delivered online courses where the instructor and students are logged in at the same time on a regular schedule but are not on campus.
- **(CREDIT CLASSES ONLY) – As of August 1, 2020, the faculty workload report indicated only 52 out of 162 faculty members (32%) will be teaching on-ground this semester, in classrooms that will have significantly reduced student seating capacities.** No more than 24 faculty (15%) and their students will be on campus on any given day classes are held. Even then, they will be spread out over a 14 hour period (8:00am-10:00pm) within three classroom buildings on our main campus, and at several offsite instructional locations.
- Campus Operations staff created space between students in existing classrooms and labs by first measuring the minimum distance between seats and workstations while trying to maximize occupancy in the safest possible manner. Operations staff either (a) removed excess furniture and marked the floor where seats are to be placed, or

(b) left all or most of the existing furniture in place but clearly marked which chairs are available for seating.

- New signage was posted with the new, reduced maximum occupancy for each room, directions to sit only in marked seats, directions not to move furniture, and diagrams of how the seats should be arranged to achieve social distancing (in case furniture IS moved).
- The college designated certain non-classroom spaces as physically larger classrooms capable of accommodating a greater number of students than standard smaller classrooms, but at the 6-foot distancing requirement. Equipment will be provided to assist presenters with audio amplification and projection screens visible to all areas of the room. Students with vision or hearing impairments will be accommodated appropriately.
- Where 6-foot spacing is not possible for clinical training or workforce development programs, the college will require students and employees to wear both masks and plastic face shields, in addition to any other requirements common in those industry sectors. For example, all clinical classes in the Radiologic Technology program are held on the campus of Middlesex Health. We are required to follow the hospital's safety precautions which include medical-grade N-95 masks.
- The hallways in MxCC's buildings are too narrow to accommodate 6-foot distancing for passing traffic. We explored the possibility of creating one-way traffic, but the length of the hallways proved that to be too inconvenient. We instead marked the floors to indicate 6-foot spacing and installed floor and wall signage to be mindful of oncoming traffic.
- Similarly, the stairwells in campus buildings are narrow. We explored the possibility of creating one-way traffic in buildings that have more than one stairwell. We accomplished this with the divided circular staircase in Chapman Hall's rotunda, with one-way traffic going to the right (similar to driving through a traffic circle). However, the stairwells in Snow and Wheaton Halls are on opposite ends of the building, creating a major inconvenience which would make enforcement very difficult. We instead marked the floors to indicate 6-foot spacing and installed floor and wall signage to be mindful of oncoming traffic.
- The college will revisit the possibility of implementing one-way traffic if students and employees cannot maintain sufficient distance in the hallways and stairwells.

Dining Halls:

6-feet of physical spacing has been achieved by moving and removing furniture from the college Cafeteria. We are in discussions with our food service provider to offer “grab and go” items, an online ordering system, and to temporarily cease “made to order while you wait” meals that will create queues and congregating. The vendor will switch to single-use condiments. We will also expand vending machine selections.

Surfaces will be cleaned regularly by custodial services. Disposable wipes will be available for diners to clean tables before/after meals.

Athletics:

Not applicable. Middlesex Community College does not have athletic programs or a wellness center/workout room.

Spaces “where other groups congregate”:

6 feet of physical spacing has been achieved where students congregate, such as in the Learning Commons (library, tutoring, and distance learning), Pavilion, Student Lounge, and small break rooms. This has been done by (re)moving furniture and adding signage. The Game Room (pool table, etc.) will be closed indefinitely. The college does not own or operate shuttles or other transportation vehicles.

Residence Halls:

Not applicable. Middlesex Community College has no dormitories.

Orientation/Arrival:

The college is conducting online orientation events and communications (email, paper mail, website) to advise returning students to maintain 6-foot physical distancing and require wearing facial masks while on campus. This includes brief “video tours” to illustrate how distancing will be created through floor decals and specific seating assignments. Students will be advised to seek accommodations through Disability Services, if necessary.

Personal protective equipment:

Masks: Everyone on campus is required to wear a facial mask.

Students, vendors, and visitors are required to bring and wear their own masks. The college will post sentries at the entrance to each building. The sentries will check for the presence of a student/employee photo ID, facial mask, and (if needed) proof of appointment to visit a campus office.

Employees are invited to bring their own masks. The college is providing each employee a packet of five washable, reusable masks. Employees are responsible cleaning and maintaining the cleanness of their issued reusable masks.

Students, vendors, and visitors who forget to bring a mask will be provided one disposable mask by the building sentry. Repeated violations for not bringing, or not wearing, a mask by a

student will be referred to the Office of the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. Repeated violations by vendors and visitors will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Administration.

Other PPE requirements: Food service, public safety, custodial, and other vendors will follow any special PPE requirements mandated more generally for those industries. This expectation has been communicated to the company supervisors and will be monitored through contract enforcement.

Disinfection: Hand sanitizing dispensers are available at entrances to all buildings and large gathering spaces. Disposable wipes are available in all bathrooms, classrooms and other shared facilities (e.g., copy machines, coffee stations) for wiping down surfaces. Students and employees are reminded to wash hands frequently. Public, corridor and office spaces and their bathrooms are cleaned in accordance with the State's general guidelines for businesses.

Shared Workstations:

In places including (but not limited to) the Learning Commons (Library, Distance Learning, and Academic Success Center), computer labs, classroom teaching stations, and employee printing stations where surfaces such as computers and printers are handled by multiple users, **it will be the responsibility of each user to clean keyboards, mice, work surfaces, and any other equipment (printers, copiers) before and after each use.** Disinfectant will be provided, and signage will be posted that provide instructions.

Travel:

Employees have been advised that the Governor's out-of-state travel ban for professional activities is still in force. College administration will act as a checkpoint for employees' work-related travel through the standard Travel Authorization Request process.

Students and employees have been advised to avoid unnecessary personal travel both domestically and internationally, and to voluntarily inform the college when planning to travel out of state. Students and employees have been advised to comply with Executive Orders and regulations concerning out-of-state travel, such as self-quarantining after visiting certain other States with a high incidence of COVID-19.

Staffing:

Faculty and staff will be encouraged to work at home whenever possible. Employees whose work duties are determined by management to be necessary on-campus and who fall into high-risk categories for severe illness from COVID-19 as identified by the CDC, will be strongly advised to seek official accommodations for teleworking through the Human Resources Regional Manager.

Faculty, students and staff have been explicitly instructed not to come to work if they are experiencing COVID-like symptoms, seek medical attention, and report such illness to College Administration.

Access to Campus:

The college has identified a single point of entry for each of its four public buildings on campus (Chapman, Founders, Snow, and Wheaton Halls) and at each of its off-site instructional locations (currently, Middlesex Health Education Center, Pieper Memorial Veterinary Center, Platt High School, Vinal Technical High School, and Wilcox Technical High School).

A sentry will be posted at each entry on campus and at the three high schools.

Photo IDs and facial masks will be required to enter any building on campus and at the college's off-site instructional locations. Students and employees may show their college-issued ID badge for fastest entry. Visitors may show any photo ID together with proof of appointment (or, the sentry may phone the office where the visitor wishes to go).

HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) Systems:

As much as practical with building systems and daily environmental conditions, building HVAC fresh air intake will be increased during normal operating hours and after scheduled hours will be run maximizing the fresh air intake to complete two complete air exchanges. HVAC filters have been verified to be, or are scheduled to be changed to, MERV 8 or better.

PART 2 – PLAN FOR MONITORING THE HEALTH OF STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF

Testing of students in residential institutions for the COVID-19 virus upon arrival on campus:

Not applicable. Middlesex Community College has no dormitories.

Community colleges and other non-residential institutions with only commuting students are not required to test students. However, commuter colleges should formalize relationships with local departments of public health to support referrals for testing and contact tracing.

Appointment of a COVID-19 Coordinator:

Ms. Kimberly Hogan, Dean of Administration, has been designated as the college's COVID-19 Coordinator. Dr. Steven Minkler, Chief Executive Officer, will serve in this capacity during Dean Hogan's absence.

The Coordinator will (i) be the liaison with the coordinators at the other colleges and universities who will convene periodically during the fall (and beyond if needed) and (ii) providing reporting to external stakeholders when requested.

Protocol for collecting information about COVID-19 cases:

Employees and students should monitor their own symptoms and report them to their own health care providers. They are also asked to disclose to college administration that they are experiencing possible COVID-19 symptoms and to inform the COVID Coordinator if they test positive.

PART 3- PLAN FOR CONTAINMENT

Isolation space:

The college has identified a small, single-occupancy isolation space where a student or employee, who discloses signs of illness, may wait for transportation (if needed) to take them home or to a health care provider. This space will be sanitized regularly.

Isolation protocol:

Not applicable. Middlesex Community College has no dormitories.

Medical care for those isolated:

The college does not employ medical staff of any kind. Employees and students should monitor their own symptoms and report them to their own health care providers. In case of emergency situations or a severe outbreak, the college has a liaison with two local hospitals – Middlesex Health in Middletown, and Midstate Medical Center in Meriden.

Quarantine protocol:

Not applicable. Middlesex Community College has no dormitories.

Contact tracing:

The CSCU Community Colleges are not required to implement contact tracing. Contact tracing will be led by the local department of public health and should not be initiated by the colleges.

Positive test results will be reported to the state directly from the testing providers and contact tracing will commence. Employees who have tested positive will be contacted by the health department to check on their condition and to identify potential individuals who may be impacted by close contact with the infected employee. Those contacts will hear from the health department as well to check on their condition and recommend steps to address potential exposure. Employees should indicate that they work at one of the community colleges and provide their recent activities. The college will share class rosters, staff appointment schedules, and daily campus access logs with the local health department if helpful in contact tracing efforts.

Should an employee be notified of a positive test result, they are encouraged to contact the COVID Coordinator at their campus. The COVID Coordinator should share that information with the local department of public health. The department will work with the college should steps be necessary to address the spread of virus on campus and conduct the contact tracing as outlined above.

Liaison with regional hospitals and health care facilities:

Middlesex Community College has established liaison relationships with the Departments of Public Health in Middletown and Meriden, the sites of our main campus and satellite instructional centers. We have also been in contact with key health care facilities in our area.

Middletown Health Department

Joseph Havlicek, MD, Director
Office (860) 638-4967

Kevin Elak, RS, Public Health Manager
Cell (860) 502-9497
Office (860) 638-4960

Meriden Department of Health & Human Services

Lea Crown, MPH, Director
Cell (203) 695-8381; Office (203) 630-4221

PART 4 – PLAN FOR SHUTDOWN

Shutdown initiated by the institution if a serious outbreak occurs on campus:

All employees and students are encouraged to notify the COVID Coordinator if they have tested positive for COVID-19. Local departments of public health will also be notifying the COVID Coordinator of positive cases that are reported to the state that are linked to the campus.

The COVID Coordinator should inform the Campus CEO and gather specific information on when the individual was last on campus, their role on campus, their schedule for 2-3 days prior to their last day on campus, etc. In the event the infected individual is a student, the Dean of Academic & Student Affairs and Associate Dean of Student Affairs will be made aware of the positive test. If the infected individual is an employee, the Regional HR Manager will be made aware.

Once information has been gathered on the circumstances, the CEO will inform the Capital-East Regional President who will meet with Alice Pritchard, CSCU Chief of Staff, and Keith Epstein, Vice President of Facilities, to discuss recommended next steps.

The college will identify a local action team (including facilities, communications, human resources, etc.) to implement steps to mitigate the spread of the virus as discussed with the CSCU team. After these discussions, the COVID Coordinator will inform the local public health department of plans to address any outbreaks and seek additional guidance. **No CSCU community college campus can be closed without concurrence from CSCU system office and planned communication strategy to internal audiences and the public.**

Shutdown of the State:

Middlesex Community College will follow the Governor's instructions if a statewide shutdown is again required. As was the case in March 2020, all employees will be directed to telework until further notice. All classes, student services, and administrative functions will revert to fully online format.

Plan for continuation of instruction if a shutdown occurs:

All classes, services, and administrative activities will move to a fully online format if the entire college is forced to shut down. The college is prepared to move portions of its operations and classes to online format if something less than the entire campus must be closed due to a limited outbreak, to allow for sanitization of just the affected spaces. Middlesex Community College adapted very quickly to this situation in March 2020. Since then, we have four months of experience in being a fully online college and a majority of our faculty have engaged in professional development activities to strengthen their ability to teach and manage classes in the online space.